



vedovamazzei



Founded on 02/01/1990.  
Artists: Stella Scala, born in 1964 - Simeone Crispino, born in 1962  
They live and work in Milan

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Altre voci, altre Stanze/Other voices, other rooms  
Ambienti d'Artista/Artists Environments  
Curated by Cloe Piccoli  
Opening Wednesday 19 June 2002

Date: 7 pm  
20 June/ 30 September  
Tuesday/Friday 11/15 -16/20 - Saturday 11/13 – 16/20



*Short Sighted, 2002*  
30 Ø cm



*Short Sighted, 2002*



*Short Sighted, 2002*



*Short Sighted, 2002*

The solo show by Vedovamazzei at the Magazzino d'Arte Moderna, continues the series of exhibitions entitled *Altre voci, altre stanze/Other voices, other rooms*, curated by Cloe Piccoli, to explore the research of contemporary artists in the field of environments. Abstract and physical spaces, true architectures or virtual simulations, projects in miniature or interventions in real buildings: in recent years many artists have chosen to work on the notion of spaces. They have built rooms, houses, ateliers, studios, boats, neighborhoods, entire cities with the humanistic aim of putting man back

at the center of the universe, and with the idea of creating spaces as places of experience whose precise, particular character can stimulate the mind and the senses, touching our deepest emotions.

In a period in which urban evolution is moving in the direction of the "Generic City", as it has been defined by the Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas in his book *S,M,L,XL*, in sprawling urban aggregates without history or roots, characterized by variable identity in constant transformation, artists are inventing and constructing spaces in pursuit of a precise, definite, unmistakable identity.

While the Generic City, this complex, elusive contemporary phenomenon, is "a place freed from the confinement of the center and the tyranny of identity ... a city without history ... large enough for everyone ... equally exciting and boring, without distinction, in every point ... superficial as a Hollywood studio, which can produce a new identity every Monday morning", on the other hand artists create personal, paradoxical environments where nothing is predictable or left to chance, but in which every element interacts with the visitor.

For the Magazzino d'Arte Moderna the duo Vedovamazzei (Stella Scala and Simeone Crispino) has created a project composed of three elements: a large environmental installation, *Novel 1* (2002), a sculpture, *Short Sighted* (2002), and a series of **watercolors**.

*Novel 1* (2002) is a true one-storey house (230x200x55 cm) with a pitched roof, a window open to offer a view of the interior, a door that invites you to enter. A three-dimensional installation in tufa, the house protrudes from a bookcase hung on the wall. An extension of the real architecture of the gallery or instead a place 'embedded' in another environment, *Novel 1* is simultaneously an abstract and a real space. Real, because it is a little house, an archetype of habitation and everyday life. Abstract, because the perspective is distorted, foreshortened as in medieval frescoes or children's drawings. But *Novel 1* opens an even larger store of imagery, in which the idea of everyday space spreads into the realms of history, narrative, novel, scientific treatise. The concrete space of this work coincides with mental and literary space. As a matter of fact, the idea of *Novel 1* springs out of the reflections, thoughts, memories inspired by the concept and the sentiment of the house of artists and intellectuals. The most direct references of this work of art cross historic epochs and different concepts: from the Giotto's frescoes for the Assisi Basilica, to the Buster Keaton's movie *One Week*, to a photograph of Céline's native house in Normandie placed by the writer on the bookshelves of his exile's residence in Denmark.

The environments of Vedovamazzei, a house (*Novel 1*, 2002), a room (*Solar and Heliospheric Observatory*, 2001), a mirror (*Short Sighted*, 2002), a truck with a trailer, containing a lake (*Go wherever you want, bring me wherever you wish*, 2000), a pond of genetically modified waterlilies (*Armonia Meravigliosa*, 2000), a square meter of ocean (*Stella maris*, 2001), to name just a few, are real, everyday spaces that extend into the imagination, into remote times and spaces. Projected into a cosmic dimension, as in the recording of the rotation of the earth and the sun in *Solar and Heliospheric Observatory*, driven toward a vision of an artificial and genetically modified nature as in *Go wherever you want, bring me wherever you wish*, infiltrating the history of art and literature as in the works in this show, from *Novel 1* (2002) to *Short Sighted* (2002) to the watercolors.

While *Novel 1* crosses abstract and real space, *Short Sighted*, a circular mirror that rotates at the speed of 3000 rpm, so rapidly it seems to stand still, reflects reality in a completely arbitrary manner. The space reflected is no longer faithful to real space, but opens a new dimension, a perspective view in which only the nearest objects are in focus, while the rest of the image is blurred.

The watercolors, an important element in the context of the exhibition, and fundamental parts of the work of Vedovamazzei, always contain a precise reference to the traditional of painting, exploring the idea of space as an arbitrary place, of perspective as an evanescent mirage open to infinite possibilities.



*Novel 1*, 2002  
230x200x55 cm



(detail)



watercolors, 2002



watercolors, 2002



Céline's house-exile  
watercolors, 2002  
76x56cm



Céline's bookshelves

Everyday circumstances, coincidental situations, strange events, happenstance and instances of destiny, bizarre tales bordering on the incredible, yet sometimes true, scientific mirages, historical recollections, genetic manipulations constitute the rich, winding labyrinth of inspiration of vedovamazzei. Someone Crispino and Stella Scala operate with attention, sensitivity, a penchant for skepticism, but also a genuine visionary bent in the complex reality whose ambiguities, deviancies, anomalies they narrate. But the subversive attitude of vedovamazzei, the focus on extraordinary situations and unencoded aspects represent the pursuit of a richness and depth of meaning that goes beyond our first impressions of things. Therefore in *Novel 1*, the installation created for the exhibition at the Magazzino d'Arte Moderna, a symbolic, primordial element, an archetype such as that of the home, opens the way for an endless sequence of meanings, memories, allusions and illusions. An anomalous, 'irregular' space, the house of *Novel 1* is three-dimensional, but the distorted, almost flattened construction of the perspective, as in a painting from the Middle Ages, overturns any certainty and introduces doubts about the rationality of this environment, its construction and/or representation, about the very possibility of experiencing this space. Like the house Buster Keaton builds and rebuilds in *One Week* (1920), with ever changing and increasingly bizarre forms, utilizing doors as windows, balustrades as staircases, roofs in place of balconies, *Novel 1* by vedovamazzei is an unstable space, a metaphor for the changing human condition. Hung on the wall of the gallery, inserted with a subversive and stubbornly visionary gesture, like a book, in a bookcase, this actual-size house creates a moment of suspension, like that moment of silence in the film before the collapse of the edifice, a moment in which every possibility is still plausible. This suspension brought about by the work of vedovamazzei is the threshold leading to a world in which defined rules and established codes are replaced by a dimension in which the space of experience overlaps and mingles with the space of the narrative. The house and the book coincide, just like reality and mirage, art and life. The 'distorted' vision of space, like the 'myopic' reflection of the *Short Sighted Mirror*, which rotates at the speed of 3000 rpm, putting only certain objects of the landscape into focus, is the choice of a different, transverse gaze that captures differences to create new harmonies.

### Duo shows

2002 *Altre Voci, Altre Stanze*, Magazzino d'Arte Moderna, Rome; *Caveau*, Palazzo delle Papesse, Siena / 2001 *Eldorado* Galleria d'arte moderna e contemporanea, Bergamo; *Processo alla Natura* Casa La Marrana, Montemarcello, Ameglia (La Spezia) / 2000: Magazzino d'arte moderna, Rome; The Box Associati, Turin / 1999 Artra, Milan / 1998: Studio Guenzani, Milan; British School at Rome, Rome; Severiarte, Bologna / 1997 Centre for Contemporary Photography Melbourne (Australia) / 1996 C/O Care of, Cusano Milanino, Milan / 1995: Studio Guenzani, Milan / 1993: Galleria Fac-Simile, Milan / 1992 Galleria Fac-Simile, Milan / 1991 Institut Francais de Naples, Naples.

### Group shows

2002 2nd Montreal Biennial, Canada; Panorama Film & Video *Clash or Jam* KINOmobilier, museumtuin/museum gardens, Utrecht, Holland / 2001 *Comunicación entre las artes*, "Videorum", Valencia Biennial; *Adriatico: le due sponde*, 52nd Premio Michetti, Francavilla al Mare; *Magic and Loss*, *Contemporary Italian Video*, Lux Centre 2-4 Hoxton Square, London; *Art is a Fifth Element*, Premio Querini Stampalia – Furla per l'arte- 2nd edition, Venice; *Eldorado*, Galleria d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Bergamo / 2000: *Over the Edges*, Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst (S.M.A.K.) Ghent (Belgium); *3 Raume 3 Flusse* Hann. Munden (Germany); *Où sont les hommes?* Frac Fond Régional d'Art Contemporaine, Languedoc-Roussillon, Montpellier; *Migrazioni*, Premio per la giovane arte italiana, Centro Nazionale per le Arti Contemporanee, Rome / 1999 *Exit*, *International Artist-Made Film and Video*, Chisenhale Gallery, London / 1998: *Selection video Made in Italy*, I.C.A, Boston; *Lepisma saccharina*, Magazzino d'arte moderna, Rome / 1997 *Fatto in Italia*, Centre d'art contemporain, Geneva / I.C.A. London; *Fuori Uso*, Pescara / 1995 *Campo 95*, Venice; Fondazione Re Rebaudengo, S. Antonino di Susa (Turin) / Konstmuseum Malmö, Sweden; *Beyond the Borders*, Kwanjiu Biennial, Korea / 1994 *Prima linea* Flash Art Museum of Contemporary Art, Trevis; *Oriente mediterraneo*, Cairo.